

Date: July 19, 2013

To: Councilmember Nick Licata, Chair,  
Seattle City Council Housing, Human Services, Health & Culture Committee

Sally Bagshaw, Councilmember  
Bruce Harrell, Councilmember  
Tom Rasmussen, Councilmember

From: Catherine Lester, Interim Director  
Human Services Department

Re: Addendum to Human Services Department response to City Council Statement of  
Legislative Intent, 104-1-A-1, requesting a report on barriers to housing for homeless  
families.

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This memorandum provides additional information on the Seattle Human Services Department's (HSD) response to Seattle City Council's Statement of Legislative Intent 104-1-A-1, included in the 2013 Adopted Budget. HSD submitted the response to City Council on July 1, 2013.

HSD is providing additional information on the scope of the changes made to reduce barriers. This information was requested by the Chair of the City Council Housing, Human Services, Health and Culture for its discussion of the SLI response scheduled on Friday, July 26, 2013.

A summary and examples of changes to program eligibility and screening as a result of the King County Family Homelessness Initiative's efforts to remove barriers to emergency housing (shelter), transitional housing programs and domestic violence programs is attached.

I appreciate your interest in addressing the challenges faced by families experiencing homelessness. I am happy to answer any questions you may have about the additional information. My staff looks forward to the discussion next week.

CC: Beth Goldberg, City Budget Office  
Jeanette Blankenship, City Budget Office  
Ben Noble, Council Central Staff  
Traci Ratzliff, Council Central Staff  
Susana Serna, Council Central Staff  
Jaline Quinto, City Council Liaison, Mayor's Office  
Debbi Knowles, Family Homelessness Initiative Project Manager, King County  
Julie McFarland, Catholic Community Services, Family Housing Connection

**Seattle Human Services Department**  
**Barriers to Housing for Homeless Families**  
**Addendum: Response to Statement of Legislative Intent (SLI) 104-1-A-1**

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**Removing Barriers to Housing: Eligibility Criteria**

In the SLI response, HSD included information regarding the changes agencies were making in their program eligibility criteria, in order to reduce barriers for families. FHI coordinated a review of eligibility criteria for more than 80 programs that participate in the county-wide coordinated entry and assessment/referral system for emergency housing for homeless families, Family Housing Connection (FHC). HSD participated in this review, and the criteria for twenty-eight (28) Seattle funded programs was reviewed.

The table below provides a summary of the changes to eligibility screening criteria for Seattle-funded programs participating in FHC. [Some programs removed more than one barrier.](#)

	Number of Programs That Removed Barriers
<b>Chemical Dependency:</b> Programs that don't specialize in chemical dependency services have removed criteria that screen for chemical dependency, and are prepared to provide alternative screening mechanisms (e.g. completion of treatment programs) for persons with drug or alcohol-related convictions. The majority of programs that are not designated as "Clean and Sober" have also removed Urine Analysis protocols.	18 programs
<b>Domestic Violence (DV):</b> Non-DV specific) programs have removed criteria that prevented DV survivors with current DV incidents from accessing non-confidential shelter or housing.  Domestic Violence programs have removed criteria that limited services to survivors based on the date the DV incident occurred, and replaced it with criteria that focuses on the current risk to the survivor.  Domestic violence survivors with active, lethal DV continue to be referred directly to Day One.	11 programs
<b>Mental Health:</b> Programs that don't specialize in mental health services have removed criteria that limited access to families with mental health needs; criteria removed included restrictions on the severity of the mental illness and treatment requirements.	5 programs
<b>Household Composition:</b> Programs have removed criteria that screened out single fathers or two-parent households and women who were pregnant or reunifying with their children when no other children lived in the household  Programs that provide services in communal or congregate housing, including DV programs, may focus services on single mothers.  Programs also now accept male and transgender survivors of domestic violence in addition to female survivors, with the exception of one program that offers communal emergency housing.	4 programs